

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Survey No. 4740

1. Name

Historic 506 – 528 South Bethel Street
and / common

2. Location

street & number 506 – 528 South Bethel Street
city, town Baltimore
state & zip code Maryland 21231 county

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name
street & number telephone
city, town state & zip code

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Baltimore City Land Records liber
street & number Clarence Mitchell Courthouse folio
city, town Baltimore State Maryland

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title
date federal state county local
depository for survey records
city, town state & zip code

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7. Description

Condition		Check One	Check One
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved:
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date of move: _____

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

This group of eleven houses shows the variety of rowhouse types to be found in Fells Point, but is especially significant for 518 South Bethel, one of the few wooden houses left in the city. Built in the 1780s this house undoubtedly shared the streetscape with other similar wooden houses as well as two-and-a-half story Federal-style houses. The wooden houses have been replaced with 1880s-period early Italianate-style houses; the Federal-period houses have been enlarged to three stories.

506-508 South Bethel Street were a pair of two-and-a-half story houses with a shared sallyport which still survives. At some point in the 19th century they were enlarged to three full stories, with a very low-pitched gable roof and with a simple brick corbelled cornice. The houses are 14' wide and occupy lots 95' deep. Each house is two small rooms deep with a one-story rear kitchen addition. The houses are constructed in running bond and were originally painted. Each house has a single hooded chimney located at the peak of the gabled roof. The houses have flat wood lintels and wood sills and both have replacement 6/6 sash. The houses have no basements and are reached by a single brick step.

512 - 516 South Bethel Street were built in the 1880s as a group of small in-fill houses in the Italianate style. The houses are two stories in height, 14' and 13' wide, and occupy lots 90' deep. Each house is two small rooms deep and there is no backbuilding. Sally ports between 514 and 516, and within 512, provide access to the rear of the lots. The houses are constructed in running bond and were originally painted. 514 and 516 have been covered with formstone but 512 retains its original, very fine brickwork, laid in running bond. The window openings have wide, splayed brick lintels and wood sills; the doorway opening has a segmental arch set above a single light transom. Each house has a single hooded chimney located near the rear of the house. The shed roofs are capped by a continuous wooden cornice consisting of a crown molding supported by two long, scroll-sawn brackets decorated with grooves and turnings, framing a row of scroll-sawn modillions. The tall, narrow window and door openings have replacement 1/1 sash. The four-paneled doors are original. The houses have no basements and each house is reached by two concrete steps.

518 South Bethel Street is a two-story, three-bay wide late Federal-style wooden house with a low-pitched gable roof. It contains its own sallyport on the north side of the house, reached by a door. The house is 20' wide and occupies a lot 90' deep. The original siding has been replaced as have the original 6/6 sash. A modern sheet metal cornice and gutter have replaced the original wood. The six panel doors are also replacements. The house has no basement and the door is reached by two wide brick steps.

Continuation Sheet

520-522 South Bethel Street are a pair of three story, two-bay wide houses with central sallyport built in the 1850s. They are 12'6" wide and occupy lots 60' deep. They sport a rare round-arched doorway lintel that frames a semi-circular transom and heavy door enframingent. The houses are constructed in running bond, which was originally painted and penciled. The window openings have segmental arches and wood sills and are filled with replacement 1/1 sash. A simple brick modillion cornice caps the façade and a single chimney stack rises at the peak of the gable roof on each house. The houses have no basement and are reached by two brick or concrete steps.

524 South Bethel Street is a single two-bay wide, two-story-and-attic house with its own sallyport built in the late 1840s. The house is 17' wide and occupies a lot 50' deep. The house is constructed in running bond and was originally painted. Door and window openings have segmental arches, wood sills, replacement 1/1 sash, and a modern replacement door. The low-pitched gable roof is marked by a simple brick modillion cornice. The house has no basement and is reached by two brick steps.

526 and 528 South Bethel Street are a pair of houses whose facades have been drastically remodeled, but which share a common sallyport. 526 now sports a late Italianate-style façade (late 1880s) with Queen Anne-influenced brickwork in the window and door lintels, whereas 528 has a brown, Roman brick Renaissance Revival façade, complete with stained glass transom on both the first floor paired window and above the door, and sheet metal cornice. They are 13' wide and occupy lots 50' deep.

526 is built in running bond that was originally painted. The shed roof is capped by a late Italianate-style wooden cornice consisting of a crown molding supported by long scroll-sawn brackets decorated with grooves, connected by a lower molding strip decorated with quarter-rounds, and ending with a distinct trefoil pattern. The frieze panel, which also serves as ventilation for the attic, is decorated with a row of butterfly shapes, created with a jig saw, and is bordered at its base by a row of quarter-rounds and a row of cut-work decoration. The tall, narrow window and door openings have segmentally arched brick lintels and scroll-sawn tympanums (only one of which remains, on the door). The three rows of variously projecting header bricks that form the lintels show the stylistic influence of the decorative brickwork popular in the contemporary Queen Anne style of more elaborate Baltimore rowhouses. The windows have replacement 1/1 sash and the sills are composed of a row of headers. The house sits on a low basement, lit by a single-light sash, with a header lintel. The replacement six-panel door is reached by two brick steps.

The façade of 528 has been covered with the brown Roman brick popular in Baltimore after 1900 because of its fashionable color and because it never needed painting. The Renaissance-Revival influenced façade has a white sheet metal cornice with two simple, scrolled end brackets and a plain frieze area; window and door lintels composed of a double row of header bricks and with brick sills, and with 1/1 sash. The paired first floor window with wide, stained-glass transom is typical of the style, which on more expensive houses would have a single wide sheet of plate glass beneath the decorative transom. The house sits on a low basement reached by two brick steps.

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8. Significance

Period	Area of significance	check one & justify			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theatre	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other: specify	

Specific dates c. 1790 – c. 1900

Builder/Architect

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

This block of Bethel Street is especially significant for showing a complete range of alley house styles in the city of Baltimore in one single block—from the earliest frame houses of the 1780s and 1790s to the latest Renaissance Revival versions of the 1910s. The most important structure is 518, a late Federal-style frame house, built before 1799 when further frame construction was outlawed in the city. This, and the two-and-a-half story houses on the block, were built when Fells Point was already an important ship building center for the growing town of Baltimore. Early occupants included people involved in the maritime trades, small-scale craftsmen, and laborers who made their homes in the smaller-scale and more affordable housing located on the small “alley” streets of Fells Point. Until about 1850 Bethel Street was known as Apple Alley and its occupants were racially mixed.

520 – 524 S. Bethel are significant as representing a large group of late gable-roofed houses built in the late 1840s and 1850s to accommodate the growing labor force centered around the Baltimore waterfront and in fledgling industrial areas like Canton and southwest Baltimore. Although showing stylistic influences from Greek Revival style buildings constructed in Baltimore in the 1830s and 1840s (in the proportions of the attic windows, the chaste exterior details, and the double parlor floor plan), the outstanding feature of these houses is their extreme simplicity of design and detailing. They are practical adaptations of a current mode of building, designed to meet the need for efficient, low-cost housing for a growing working class community. The floor plan is essentially the same as that of the earlier Federal-style two-and-a-half story houses, but the opening between the two rooms is wider, reflecting popular Greek Revival tastes. The increase in height of the third story (from a dormer story to an attic story) allowed the third story to be divided into two separate rooms, in place of the one open room of the dormer story, thus providing welcome additional private living space to large families or those who had to take in boarders. The houses do not differ markedly from similar two-story-and-attic houses built on nearby main streets—they are simply somewhat narrower versions priced to serve less affluent residents of the old walking city.

Other houses are significant as representing the types of infill housing built on this alley block to replace earlier wooden structures. These Italianate-style houses are typical of those built after the Civil War to serve as inexpensive housing for the influx of newly arrived immigrant families seeking work in harbor-related activities or in the first small factories being built at this time.

The houses are especially significant as being located in the oldest part of Fells Point, only a few blocks from the water, and represent an integral part of the history of this National Register district. Slated for demolition in the 1960s as part of the planned East-West highway connection existing segments of I-95 to the north and south of the city, these houses were saved by local preservation activists who created the Fells Point National Register District in 1969.

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9. Major Bibliographic References

Mary Ellen Hayward and Charles Belfoure, *The Baltimore Rowhouse*
(New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999)

10. Geographic Data

Acreage of nominated property

Quadrangle name

Verbal boundary description and justification

11. Form Prepared by

name / title Dr. Mary Ellen Hayward

Organization The Alley House Project

street & number 1306 Carrollton Ave.

city, town Baltimore

date June 2000

telephone

state & zip code Maryland 21204

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotate Maryland, Article 41, section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of rights.

Return to:

DHCP/DHCD

Maryland Historical Trust

100 Community Place

Crownsville MD 21032-2023

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506-528 S. Bethel St.

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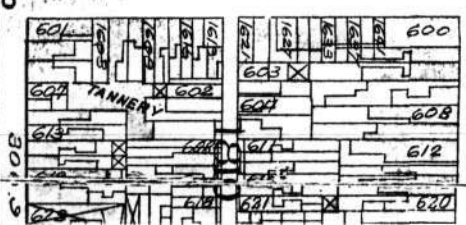
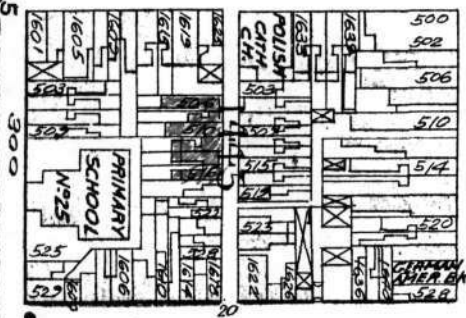
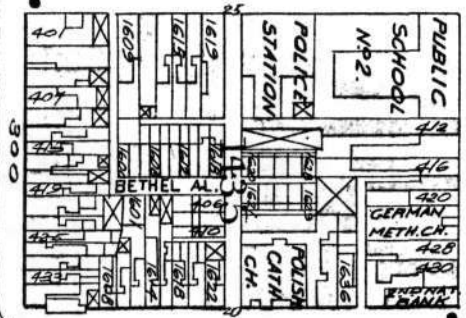
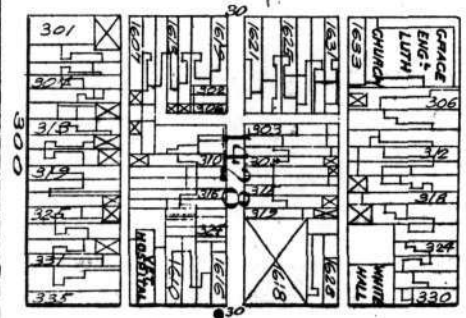
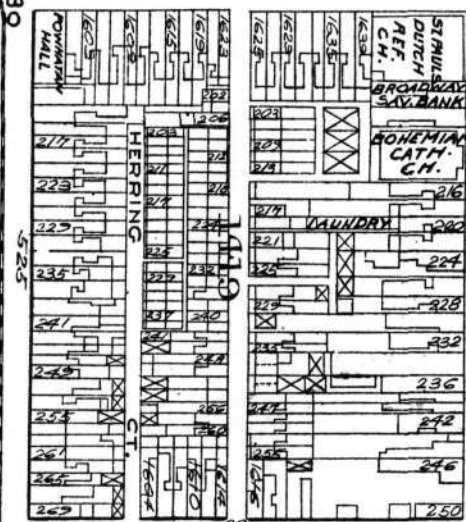
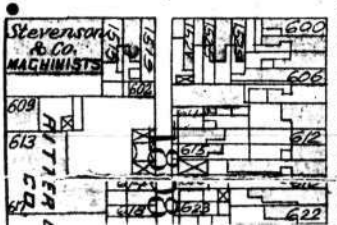
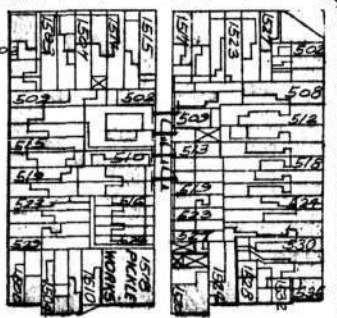
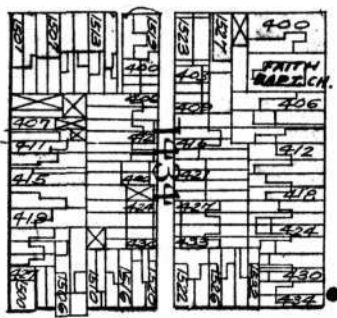
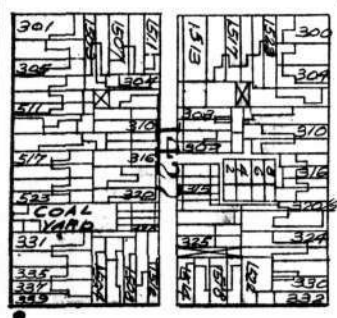
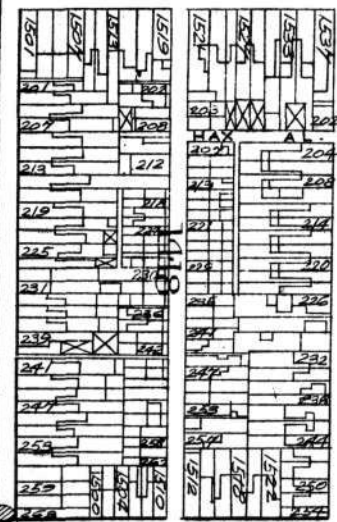
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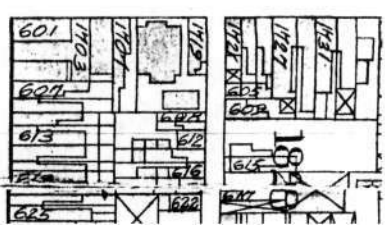
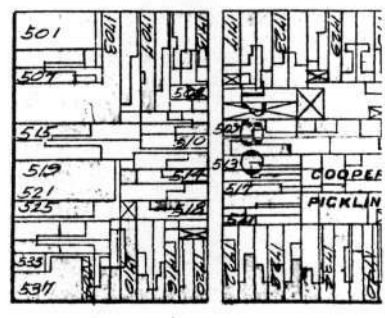
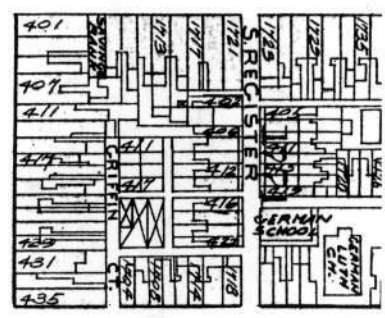
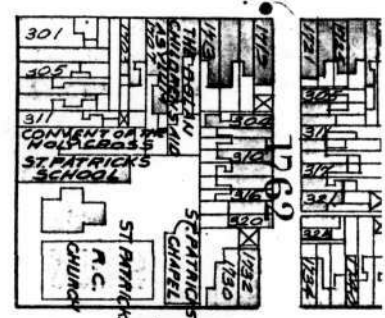
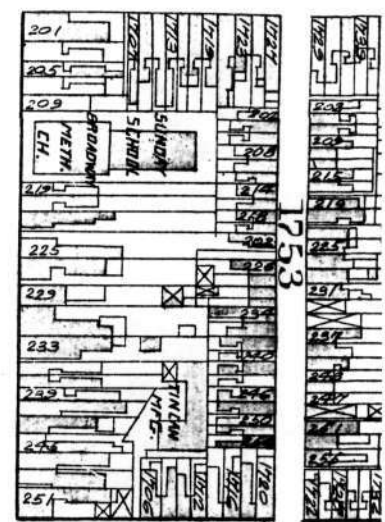
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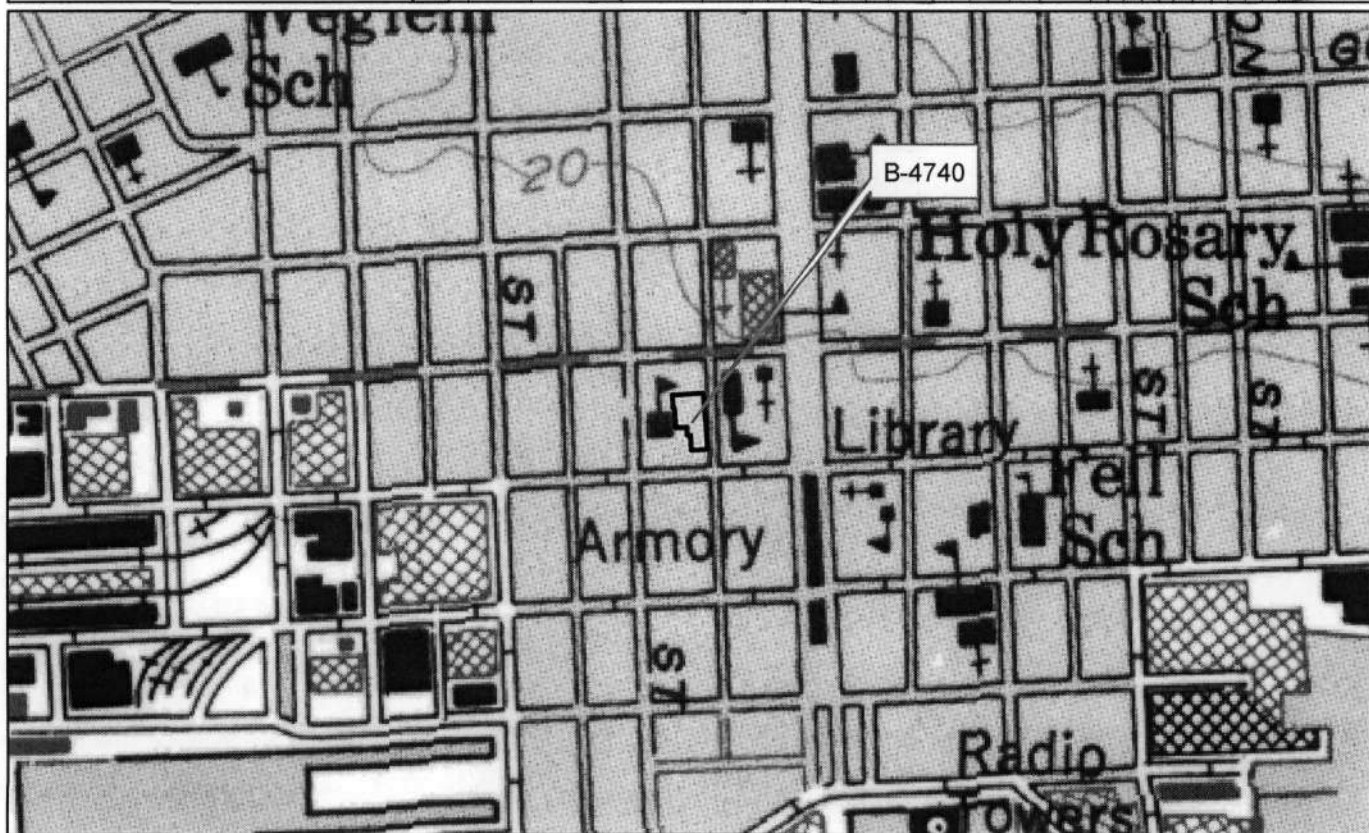
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GIS data Courtesy of
the City of Baltimore, MOIT/EGIS





506-508 S. Bethel

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506-508 S. Bethel St.

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506-508 S. BETHEL ST. BALTO MD



512-516 S. Bethel

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ENCLOSURE



526 S. Bethel

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506-528 S. Bethel St

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528 S. Bethel

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